

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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Z 081815Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 3715

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4530

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT SPLIT

REFS: (A) LISBON 3748; (B) LISBON 4127 (C) LISBON 4519

FOLLOWING ARE ANSWERS TO STATE FLASH 187632:

1. VIABILITY. POLITICAL PARTY TIES OF MODERATE AFM OFFICERS SIGNING ANTUNES STATEMENT: THIS QUESTION ANSWERED IN REFTEL A: WE WOULD ALSO NOTE THAT OFFICERS WHO SIGNED STATEMENT COVER WIDE POLITICAL SPECTRUM WITHIN AFM WITH ONLY PCP AND ITS SYMPATHIZERS, AND ROSA COUTINHO FACTION NOT ON BOARD. SEVERAL OFFICERS WE HAVE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LEFT NATIONALIST GROUP (REF A) HAVE SIGNED THE DOCUMENT.

2. PS, PPD, CDS REACTION: DEMOCRATIC PARTIES ARE DELIGHTED WITH THE STATEMENT. THEY HAVE NOT YET DECIDED HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION. PS IS LIKELY TO TAKE STRONGEST PUBLIC POSITION FOLLOWED BY PPD. CDS HAS BEEN MORE CAUTIOUS BUT ALSO LIKELY TO SUPPORT DOCUMENT. EXACTLY HOW THEY RESPOND WILL DEPEND ON THE DEGREE OF MILITARY SUPPORT FOR MODERATES. WE HAVE HEARD THAT 400 OFFICERS SIGNED THE ANTUNES DOCUMENT SO FAR, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW YET AS TO WHAT UNITS ARE REPRESENTED -- A KEY PIECE OF INFORMATION. ULTIMATE POSITION OF OTELO AND ROSA COUTINHO GROUP WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT. IF, AS SOARES SAYS, OTELO IS ON BOARD, THIS COULD BE DECISIVE, BUT OTELO IS KNOWN FOR CHANGING POSITION OVERNIGHT. ROSA COUTINHO WILL PROBABLY

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NOT SIGN DOCUMENT.

3. BREAK WITH GONCALVES: AFM IS ALREADY BROKEN, ALTHOUGH ALL FACTIONS ARE NOT YET IDENTIFIABLE. THE BREAK IS EXTREMELY DEEP. THERE IS ALREADY TALK OF ARRESTS OF THE ANTUNES GROUP AND JESUINO (INFORMATION MINISTER) HAS SUGGESTED THAT LEGAL ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THEM. WHILE THE AFM HAS BEEN ABLE TO PAPER OVER DIFFERENCES IN THE PAST WE THINK THIS ONE WILL NOT YIELD TO COMPROMISES.

4. WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY NEW REQUESTS FROM MODERATES FOR ASSISTANCE AS A RESULT OF MELO ANTUNES'S DOCUMENT. HOWEVER WE DO EXPECT THEM TO RENEW PREVIOUS REQUESTS:

(A) A COMMITMENT THAT WE WILL PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND ENCOURAGE EUROPEANS TO DO LIKEWISE SHOULD THEY BE SUCCESSFUL IN REMOVING VASCO GONCALVES AND INSTALLING MODERATE GOVERNMENT. THIS ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT.

(B) THAT WE EXERCISE WHATEVER INFLUENCE WE HAVE TO PREVENT SPINOLA, ELP OR OTHER RIGHTWING GROUPS FROM PRECIPITATE ACTS WHILE MODERATES HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE. WHILE WE HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THIS AT HIGH LEVEL AMONG MODERATES, WE SUSPECT THAT THEY WOULD ALSO URGE US TO USE OUR INFLUENCE ON FLA TO KEEP AZORES QUIET UNTIL THE LAST ROUND IS FOUGHT HERE.

(C) KEEP THE PRESSURE ON THE USSR.

(D) IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT ATTITUDE MODERATES WILL TAKE ON AID FROM US AND EUROPE WHILE THEY ARE IN OPPOSITION. CERTAINLY THEY WOULD WANT

US TO CONTINUE WITH EXISTING PROJECTS.

SO FAR BOTH SOARES AND MELO ANTUNES HAVE URGED EUROPEANS TO GO AHEAD WITH AID (REF B). I AM ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT THEM BEFORE MY DEPARTURE TO SEE IF HIS VIEWS HAVE CHANGED.
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